DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 182 015 PS 011 156

TITLE	The Anatomy of a Program of Humane Discipline in the Atlanta Public School System.
INSTITUTION	Atlanta Public Schools, Ga.; Atlanta Teacher Corps Consortium, Ga.
PUB DATE	79
NOTE	31p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Atlanta Teacher Corps, 2930 Forrest Hill Dr., S.W., Suite 208, Atlanta, GA 30315 ($0.50; 10 or more copies, $0.30 each)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Discipline Policy; *Program Development; *Public Schools; Questionnaires; School Surveys; *Suspension; Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS	Detention; *Georgia (Atlanta)

ABSTRACT

This document on discipline in school describes the policy, processes and products prepared as supportive resources used in Atlanta, Georgia schools. Basic components of inservice training and support for the discipline policy are listed. A school climate survey questionnaire used in a survey of teachers is included with results which reflect the attitudes of Atlanta classroom teachers toward the district's discipline program. Supportive resources for discipline program implementation include a district operations manual, administrator and teacher manual, action plan forms, brochures for students and letters to parents. Procedures for in-school suspension and a detention policy are indicated. (Author/RH)

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ATLANTA TEACHER CORPS
ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES CENTER
2930 Forrest Hill Drive, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30315

The Anatomy of a Program of Humane Discipline in the Atlanta Public School System, Division of Instructional Planning and Development

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FOREWORD

The Atlanta School Board, the Superintendent of Schools, and the administrative leadership are in agreement. The climate of our schools, the attitudes of personnel who must be on the scene to insure the smooth operation of our schools, the general atmosphere of the learning environment, and how people feel about one another, are all a part of the phenomenon that concerns all of education--discipline.

The Atlanta Public School System is taking a broad-based, candid and honest look at its clientele and personnel in terms of discipline. Never before in the history of the school system have such expansive efforts been undertaken to address so sensitive an issue. The task has proven to be awesome, but the philosophy and the acceptance of the challenge to discipline with humaneness is basic:

We believe in our students
We believe in our parents
We believe in ourselves: administrators, teachers, support staff -- all
We believe that we <u>are</u> the sunshine in the lives of many people....

The Philosophy

- All children, if given a chance, would rather display positive behavior than not.
- Make each child happy and self-confident, and that child will soon behave.
- Children are not adults and should not be expected to behave as adults.
- Children need time to grow, to think, to feel, to touch, to hear, to see, to aspire, to learn ....
- Children need kind, understanding, but firm and assertive, adults who will insist that young people respect authority.
- Adults who manage and guide the education of youngsters should:

  - be warm, humane, caring, firm
  - know the subject matter
  - know themselves
  - be able to present positive and humane attitudes
  - be open minded and receptive in recognizing problems and seeking rational solutions
  - be able to help each child become all that child is capable of becoming.

WHO SHAPED IT?

The guidelines for discipline in Atlanta's schools are the result of a four-year effort by volunteers from all segments of the school system and the broader community. Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Alonzo A. Crim, commissioned a Discipline Task Force. Out of the initial group grew the Discipline Re-Write Committee, A Commission on Accountability and Rights in Discipline and the Discipline Implementation Committee.

In 1978, the Board of Education and Dr. Crim invited the Atlanta Teacher Corps to assume responsibility for heading the discipline implementation program. Under the direction of Dr. Mae Armster Christian, the Teacher Corps staff has joined with members of the original Discipline Task Force to sponsor and support numerous activities.

MEMBERS OF ORIGINAL DISCIPLINE TASK FORCE

William L. Stanley, Chairperson
Administrative Analyst/Governmental Liaison
Atlanta Public Schools

Barbara I. Whitaker, Consultant
Assistant Superintendent
Student/Community Services

Opal Chamlee, Counselor
Brown High School

Edith Hammonds
Community Leader

Edwina W. Hill, Principal
Oglethorpe Elementary

Norris Hogans, Principal
Carver High School

Mary H. Phillips, Sixth Grade Teacher
Kimberly Elementary

W. E. Shaw, Principal
Long Middle School

* Evelyn C. Turner, Area Coordinator,
Services for Exceptional Children, Area II

Sacra Vaughan, Counselor
Harper High School

Prentiss Yancey
Board Attorney

Barbara Holmes, Student Intern
Atlanta University

*Although Dr. Turner is now Director of the Division of Educational Development, Georgia State Department of Education, she still serves on the Discipline Advisory Task Force.

BASIC COMPONENTS

The entire program and all products and processes related to humane discipline in Atlanta's schools have evolved for the primary purpose of assisting and supporting administrators, teachers, other significant adults, and students in increasing their understanding of the program, program planning and the preparation and maintenance of the best possible educational setting. With this basic principle in mind, a series of carefully designed and systematically developed components of the program have been activated. Among the basic components:

Administrative University - Information giving - Training for Administrators - Human Relations Development - Leadership Development - Assessment Processes	Provided intense two-week orientation to Discipline Guidelines .... Planning for Action by each principal.
Planning	Principals developed individual school action plans for informing faculty, staff, students, community.
Resources	A well-stocked Resource Center
Training Technical Assistance	Teacher Corps staff provided orientation sessions for school faculties, community groups, agencies, etc., relative to Discipline Guidelines.
Disseminating Information	Each student received brochures on Discipline Guidelines. Parents received brochures ... (mailed to every home)

Information Dissemination - - - -	All faculty, staff viewed a series of three WETV presentations on guidelines.
Orientation, Elementary Administrators - - - - -	Teacher Corps conducted orientation to Discipline Guidelines for all Elementary Principals.
Orientation to Parents, General Public - - - - -	Conferences, Parent Workshops, etc.
Involving outside persons, organizations in improving the situation - - -	Teacher Corps provided orientation to support staff.
Getting input from others interested - - - -	Teacher Corps conducted citywide conference on Discipline Guidelines.
	Citywide Advisory Committee on Discipline activated.
Getting student's input - - - - -	Teacher Corps conducted student conference on Discipline.
Monitoring school plans - - - - -	Individual school action plans evaluated.
Making effective procedures transportable - - -	Task force of teachers began development of Discipline Modules.
Training for the classroom teacher - - -	Teacher Corps conducted systemwide course in Classroom Management.
- - -	Teacher Corps conducted systemwide course in Humane Discipline.
Evaluating implementation effectiveness - - -	End of year evaluation of Discipline Program Survey conducted.
Additional Activities - - - - - -	Ongoing

DISCIPLINE PROGRAM SURVEY

In May, 1979, a survey was administered by the Atlanta Teacher Corps program as an evaluation process for determining the impact of the Atlanta Public Schools Humane Discipline Program. The survey results reflect the attitudes and opinions of Atlanta Public School classroom teachers toward the recently implemented discipline program.

Sample Population: High, Middle and Elementary Schools - N=200

Sample Approach: Stratified Proportional

Summary of Survey Results:

The greater majority (90%) of those teachers responding to the discipline survey indicated that they had been informed about their school's plan of action, concerning discipline, during regular faculty meetings. Further, 82% of those surveyed felt that the activities planned and implemented by their schools had been successful in improving school climate. Only 13% felt that their school's activities had been ineffective. These attitudes were consistent with those expressed by teachers concerning the relationships among students. Fifty-seven percent felt relationships were improving, 31% felt that relationships were positive. Teachers also indicated that their relationships with students were positive (46%) or improving (40%). Only 8% indicated that teacher-student relationships were becoming worse. Although teachers were a bit less decisive concerning their attitudes toward the school system's discipline policy and guidelines, 36% had no opinion, 46% felt positive--only 16% of those surveyed reflected negative feelings.

A majority (54%) of those teachers responding to the survey indicated that they would like to become involved in activities designed to improve the discipline situation in their school.

Teachers expressed a wide range of recommendations for improving the overall school climate in terms of discipline. However, the majority of the comments focused on consistency and the enforcement of rules as the most effective solutions to discipline.

ATLANTA TEACHER CORPS

School Climate Survey

(A) To what extent are you familiar with your school's discipline action plan?

2% ☐ Never heard of it
4% ☐ Saw a copy
90% ☐ Informed about it in faculty meetings
4% ☐ Heard about it from other faculty members

(B) Your school's efforts to improve student discipline have been:

5% ☐ Very effective
82% ☐ Effective
13% ☐ Non-effective
☐ Non-existant

(C) How would you describe student discipline in your school this year, compared to last year:

12% ☐ No change
12% ☐ Worse
76% ☐ Better

(D) Student to student relationships are:

31% ☐ Positive
11% ☐ Negative
57% ☐ Improving
1% ☐ Becoming worse

(E) How would you characterize the climate of your school?

☐ Fearful
13% ☐ Tense
40% ☐ Positive
4% ☐ Refreshing
10% ☐ Negative
34% ☐ Encouraging

Atlanta Teacher Corps
School Climate Survey
Page #2

(F) Student to teacher relationships are:

46% ☐ Positive

6% ☐ Negative

40% ☐ Improving

8% ☐ Becoming worse

(G) Your overall attitude toward the school system's Discipline Guidelines and Policy is:

48% ☐ Positive

16% ☐ Negative

36% ☐ No opinion

(H) As a teacher, which of the following do you regularly practice?

50% ☐ Planned "Rap Sessions" with students about the needs for self discipline, respect for themselves and others; discipline in our schools...

22% ☐ Student-led discussions about student discipline problems...

28% ☐ Questions/answers seminars related to concerns about discipline....

(I) In which of the following would you become an active committed participant?

32% ☐ A "hot line" for calling to a central location which will provide immediate responses and help to you with private and personal discipline-related concerns...

14% ☐ A bi-monthly seminar devoted specifically to discipline concerns...

54% ☐ Helping to organize and be an active member of a group to plan an action movement for "back to our roots in discipline and respect for authority..."

☐ Other _____

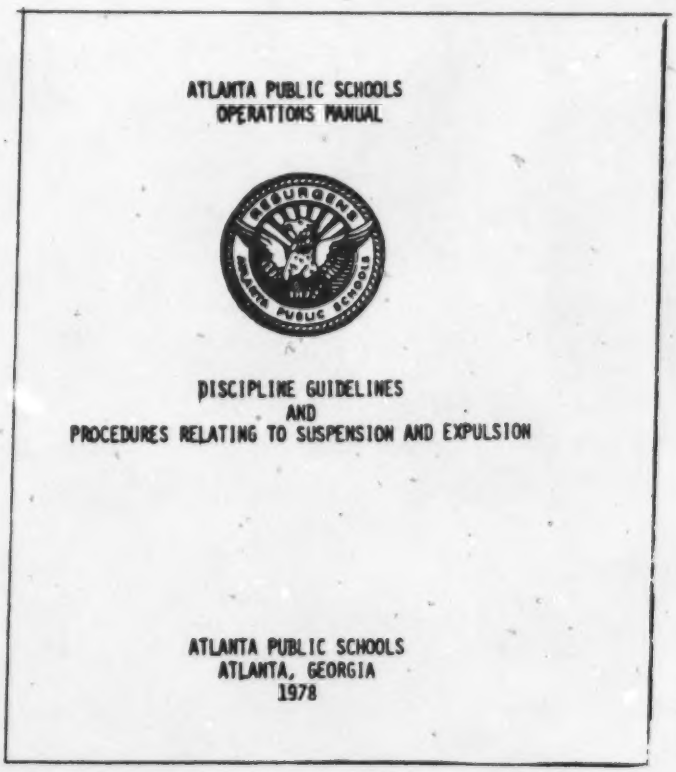
_____

_____

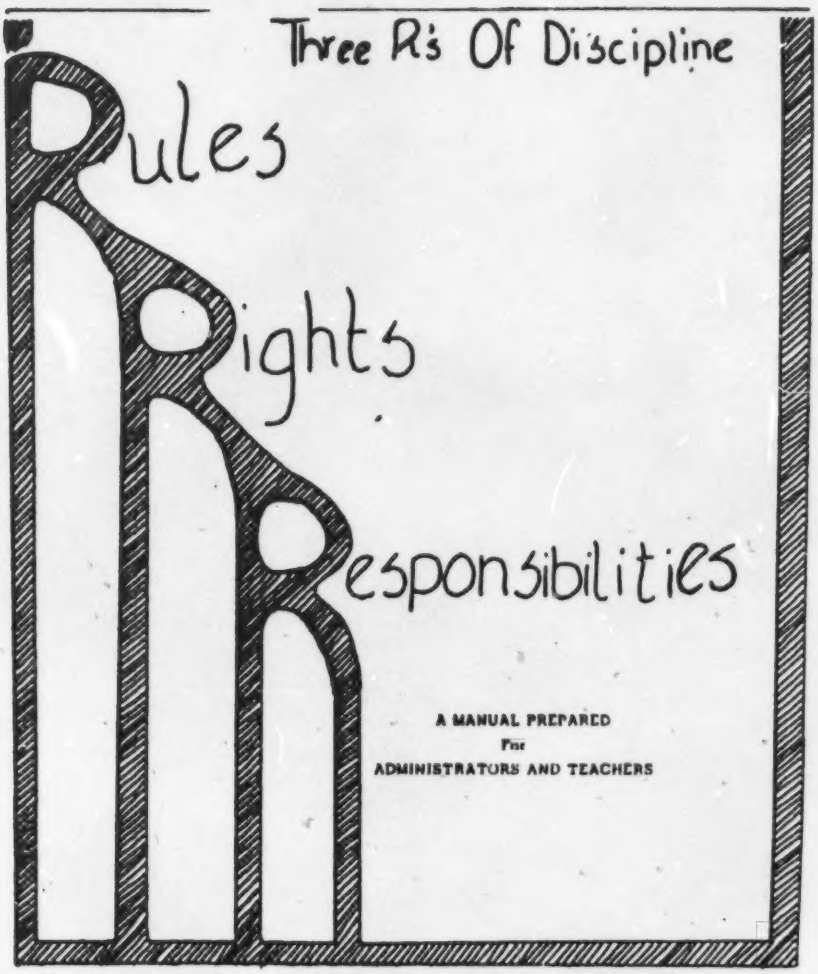
PRODUCTS

The items discussed here represent a partial summary of numerous materials which have been prepared to serve as supportive resources for program implementation.

The dissemination and support process is open. Products are supplemented by the ready availability and access of experienced and specialized staff.



The Operations Manual outlines all major procedures, requirements, rules and regulations for administering discipline in Atlanta's schools.



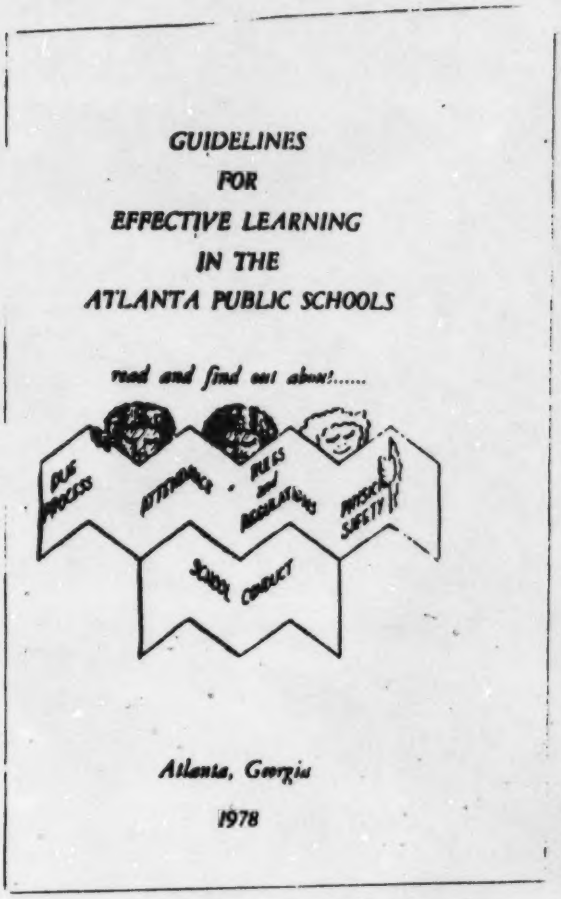
This manual, "Three R's of Discipline . . .," was prepared to assist administrators and teachers in simplifying and facilitating the utilization of the Operations Manual. "Three R's" is intended to serve as an immediately available resource. The contents systematically outline disciplinary actions, due process, suspensions, expulsions and appeal procedures--in simplified form and with numerous illustrations.

PROBLEM:

PROGRAM COMPONENT:

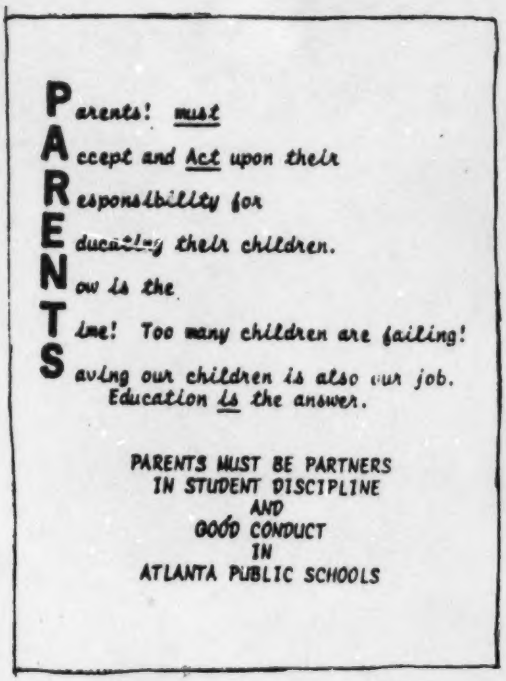
Objective	Activity (What to do) (How to do it)	Target Group	Time Frame (when)	Resources (who) (where) (what's needed)	Constraints (people, things) Problems it might cause.	Evaluation (how do you know) when, how, what, how well	Who to tell Types of Evaluation Data
					Strategies for Reducing Constraints		

The above example reflects a facsimile of action plans prepared by each school staff administrator.



. . . the brochure for students, Guidelines for Effective Learning, contains a personalized letter from the Superintendent, summarized versions of all guidelines, rules, and regulations affecting student conduct.

The Superintendent requested principals to insure that the document be placed into the hands of every student. In addition, each school administrator is expected to conduct seminars, rap sessions, assembly programs, individual conferences, etc., around the program of humane discipline. The ultimate goal is to assist students in growing to accept responsibility for, and consequences of, their behavior.



"To our Parents:

Our schools are here for the purpose of educating your children to become responsible citizens of tomorrow. We cannot do this without your help. We all must care, and share in this purpose. If our students are to learn, our schools must be safe and comfortable places. We need you--the parents--as partners to help us to insure that every child has a chance to learn...."

The above excerpt is taken from the introductory challenge issued by Dr. Crim in his letter to parents contained in the first page of the brochure for parents, Parents Must be Partners . . . .

This brochure was mailed to every household of every student in Atlanta's schools. In addition, administrators made additional copies available at P.T.S.A. meetings, parent workshops, etc. Parent brochures are also disseminated through churches and community agencies.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

To date, at least three schools in the Atlanta school system are either piloting or giving consideration to models of in-school suspension.

While the idea of in-school suspension is viewed as only one of numerous alternatives for behavior management, individual schools are encouraged to evaluate the idea based upon need. Selection of in-school suspension as a program is optional.

THE ATLANTA TEACHER CORPS PROGRAM

CHECKLIST OF FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PLANNING

AN IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROGRAM

	YES	NO
1. Is the assistant principal primarily responsible for discipline?		
2. Are regular classroom teachers, on a scheduled basis, in charge of suspension area?		
3. Are only ROTC personnel and coaches responsible for suspension area?		
4. Are teacher aides and other para-professionals responsible for supervising area/program?		
5. Do persons on duty have control of the order and discipline in the designated area?		
6. Is there evidence of cooperation of staff?		
7. Are teachers supplying proper assignments?		
8. Are teachers notified of action in time in order that they might have sufficient time to prepare needed materials and assignments?		
9. Are completed assignments returned to classroom teachers?		
10. Do on-duty teachers:		
(a) Assist students with their immediate assignments?		
(b) Aid students through meaningful activities other than regular classroom assignments?		
(c) Supervise students in performing jobs around the school?		
11. Is there a planned program of activities for students, i.e., activities related to behavior management, in addition to classroom assignments?		
12. Do students report to a designated place at beginning of the regular school hour on the day of suspension?		

CHECKLIST OF FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PLANNING AN IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROGRAM

Page 2

	YES	NO
13. Is location of designated room removed from the principal location of regular classrooms?		
14. Are students escorted to lunch?		
15. Are all privileges revoked? (Restriction of student's social life within the school to include all curricular activities?)		
16. Is there a functional communication system between administrative offices and regular classroom teachers?		
17. Is there a functional communication system between the suspension area and the administrative offices?		
18. Have program aims and student behavior expectations been explained to both parents and students?		
19. Have program and procedures been explained to total staff?		
20. Has inservice training/technical assistance to assist staff in dealing with behavior problems been provided?		
21. Is the length of the suspension reduced in accordance with the student's attitude while suspended and amount of work he/she completes?		
22. Is length of time for suspension determined only by administrators?		
23. Is length of time for suspension determined jointly by teacher involved and administrators?		
24. Do students bring textbooks, etc., for all scheduled classes?		
25. Are sufficient materials and supplies furnished for the area? (Materials such as textbooks, dictionaries, desks, typewriters, etc.)?		
26. Is a personal record form kept on each student which would indicate reason(s) for suspension, length of time, progress, etc.?		

D.M. THERRELL HIGH SCHOOL

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

DETENTION PROPOSAL

PURPOSE: In - School detention is a method designed to isolate students who are rule-breakers,- cutting class, disruptive,etc.,- from the mainstream of school activities for a period of time. However, this system of detention is to be as meaningful as possible to the student. He/She should carry out some activity that will improve his/her skills in some area of weakness or some other purposeful activities(discussions, watching films, etc.,).

Detention is also designed as an additional facet to reduce the number of out-of-school suspensions and to try to discipline the students within the confines of the school setting.

STRUCTURE: Room 300 has been designated as an administrative room. Near this room is a water fountain and student restrooms, thus making it a tightly confined area. Students in detention can be escorted directly down the stairs to the lunch room and back.

Teachers will be assigned each period to supervise the students. The on-duty teachers will assist the students with their immediate assignments.

PROCEDURE: As an alternative to out-of-school suspension, the administrative staff will place students in detention. The length of time in detention will be determined jointly by the administrator and the teachers in charge. When a student shows improvement or indicates that he/she can adjust to regular school activities, then and only then will he/she be released from detention.

The parents of these students will be notified of the school's actions in the same manner as the out-of-school suspensions, or other disciplinary actions. Conferences with parents should be carried out after a student is released from detention. These conferences should include at least one of the teachers who supervises detention and one administrator.

A personal record form should be kept on each student placed in detention indicating the reason(s) for detention, length of time, progress(if any) and recommendations.

DUTIES OF TEACHERS IN CHARGE: Detention teachers are to:

1. Aid students through some meaningful activities. These activities should include learning new skills along with improving their present skills; watching or listening to appropriate audio-visual aid; and performing some jobs around the school or campus.
2. Escorting the students to and from the lunch room.

Remember thses particular students are being "DISCIPLINED". We are trying to keep them from the mainstream of school activities for a period of time until he/she can show some improvement.

18

ADMINISTRATION DETENTION ASSIGNMENT CARD
IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION

NAME _____ GR/SEC. _____ INITAL DATE _____

PARENT _____ ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

DATE(s)	OFFENSE	DETENTION ASSIGNMENT TERMS:	REFERED BY	DETENTION PROGRESS/RECOMMEN.

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

PARENT CONTACT: _____

_____

_____

ADDITIONAL REFERALS/REMEDIATION: _____

_____

_____

DETENTION PERSONNEL COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

RELEASE APPROVAL(s)

_____ _____ _____

THERRELL HIGH SCHOOL

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Dear _____:

As of this date, your son/daughter, _____, has been referred to our detention room for a period of _____ days. This referral was done because of the following reasons.

While in detention, your child will be given opportunities to experience a change of behavior by being counseled and participating in creative problem-solving activities. The student will also be required to complete the assignments that would have been given if he/she had not been referred.

All work will be assigned and monitored. We want your child to be successful. The detention room is in existence to help. Days in attendance will be recorded as present at school instead of absent if he/she had been suspended.

In short, while in detention _____ will be required to complete all work, be cooperative, speak and act respectfully at all times, and be present at school every day.

You will (____), will not (____), have to accompany your child for a conference at the end of his/her detention.

Sincerely,

_____

Principal, Asst. Principal

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION ASSIGNMENT SHEET

Student_____ Teacher_____

Subject_____ Room # _____

Date _____

Please submit assignments for the student for _____ days. Indicate the name and level of textbook the student is working in. Complete this sheet and send all necessary materials to my office immediately, including text book.

_____

Day 1 _____

_____

_____

Day 2 _____

_____

_____

Day 3 _____

_____

_____

Day 4 _____

_____

_____

Day 5 _____

_____

_____

NOTE: You will be notified if additional assignments are necessary.

TOPIC: IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION - - DOES IT WORK?

FROM: Alan C. Harwell, Assistant Principal
Pike County High School, P.O. Box 574, Zebulon, Georgia 30295

In-school suspension is a program designed as an alternative plan to suspend a student from school. It was found, through experience, that far too often students considered suspension a holiday, during which time they could roam the streets and fall hopelessly behind in their school work ; to the point of failing courses and losing credits. In-school suspension is designed to keep students in school and attentive to their course work.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION DOES WORK. Included in the following list are factors which are essential for a successful in-school suspension program:

1. The choice of the instructor is important because he/she is the person who must see to the work aspect of the program. An individual who lacks self-assurance and/or values his popularity, could quickly allow the work aspect of the program to disappear. Secondly, many of the students who reach the point where suspension is necessary are already severe disciplinary problems. They are rude, rebellious and disorderly at times. The instructor who is emotionally unstable could quickly lose control of the order and discipline in the suspension classroom.

2. Another important factor of the satisfactory operation of the in-school suspension program, is the full cooperation of the total faculty. The work assigned the student while he is suspended serves a twofold purpose. It is intended to keep the student working, but it is also designed to keep him from falling behind in his work while he is out of the classroom. If teachers fail to supply the proper assignments to the suspension instructor, they make it doubly hard for him/her to keep the student working and deny that student the opportunity to keep up with his studies while suspended. The classroom teachers must, on a scheduled basis, assist the suspension instructor.

3. The location of the center should be removed from the principal location of the regular classrooms. A functional communication system is necessary between the suspension area and the administrative offices, and between the administrative offices and the regular classrooms.

4. An effective tool in dealing with students who have been suspended, is to reduce the length of their suspension in accordance with their attitude while suspended and amount of work they complete.

5. The operational aspects of in-school suspension must remain consistent. All privileges are revoked. For instance, the suspended student will be unable to participate in extra curricular activities such as football, band, etc.

6. It is very important that sufficient materials and supplies be furnished to the in-school suspension area. Materials such as textbooks, dictionaries, desks, typewriters, pencils, paper, etc. are essential.

7. The program must be explained to both parents and students. It will then serve as a deterrent as well as a disciplinary action.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Provide discipline-related discussions, role-playing sessions, filmstrips, and other experiences as an integrated part of the broader curriculum.
2. Provide for a broad range of curriculum ideas both in scope and content.
3. Provide numerous activities that offer opportunities to communicate with different persons (teachers, parents, peers, others).
4. Foster children's affective and cognitive development by providing varied materials, lessons and recreational experiences.
5. Continually appraise how each student is progressing in demonstrating positive behaviors.
6. Continually appraise how various aspects of each student's total development affects his/her behavioral development.
7. Use evaluative procedures that are developmentally appropriate for the age of the student and that reflect the goals and objectives for discipline--in your classroom.
8. Plan regularly for each student to feel successful about some accomplishment in order to help them see themselves as important.
9. Use ideas requested by students. <u>They do want to be involved</u>--when their ideas are feasible.
10. Plan and prepare for flexibility in order to accommodate a variety of learning styles....

The following excerpt from the May 28, 1979 issue of Education U.S.A. (p. 300) adequately summarizes an excellent guideline for school discipline.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: YOU CAN'T TEACH IT

The skills and techniques that teachers need to manage a classroom can be taught, at least to some persons. Ask a student teacher what he or she is most concerned about, and the answer is likely to be "classroom management." But teachers' colleges rarely offer a coherent approach to the subject, say professors Jere Brophy and Joyce Putnam from Michigan State U.'s Institute for Research on Teaching (IRT). Instead, most teachers develop their own "bag of tricks" combined with bits and pieces of different educational philosophies and get by the best they can. After reviewing the research in the area of classroom management, Brophy and Putnam came up with several interesting conclusions. "Teachers' success in managing classrooms will be determined not only by their skills and techniques, but also by their personal qualities," most of which can't be taught, they say. Teaching is a people business. "Individuals who are hostile, sadistic, sarcastic, defensive, prone to taking student misbehavior personally..., or are so authoritarian that they cannot tolerate student assertiveness or individuality" are not going to succeed in class. Teaching "management techniques" won't help. So, they recommend teachers' colleges and school board selection committees find ways "to identify such individuals and keep them out of the classrooms."

What about all the rest? There are several key principles gleaned from years of educational research which should be taught to prospective teachers, they say. Most could be reduced to something found in a Boy Scout manual. For example, be prepared. The key difference between successful and unsuccessful classroom managers was not how well they handled the troublemakers, according to several studies, but how well-planned their lessons were. Also, be "democratic," not "authoritarian" or "laissez-faire" as a classroom leader. Teachers should solicit student opinions and be aware of their interests and needs, but not turn over classroom management to them. Brophy and Putnam say a college preparation should bring together philosophical and psychological research on classroom management and give candidates a chance to try out specific techniques during student teaching. (Classroom Management in the Elementary Grades, IRT, Michigan State U., East Lansing, Mich. 48824)

For additional information--or to request copies of products write--or call:

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